Environmental Geotechnical Specialists

# insite

ISSUE 74

#RGSSolidGround
18 YEARS DRILLING & ADVICE

REGULAR NEWS AND VIEWS FROM **ROGERS GEOTECHNICAL SERVICES**


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FLYING THE FLAG FOR SOCIAL VALUE
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DID YOU KNOW?
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H&S POEM

## Welcome to RGS insite issue 74

Our regular newsletter celebrates 19 years of drilling and keeps you up to date with RGS and industry news.

**Rogers Geotechnical Services Ltd** are **site investigation specialists** offering ground investigation and geotechnical services to developers, builders, structural and consulting engineers, architects, insurance companies, local authorities, piling and foundation engineers, private individuals and other geotechnical consultants.

# FINDING TREASURE!

Environmental Geotechnical Specialists

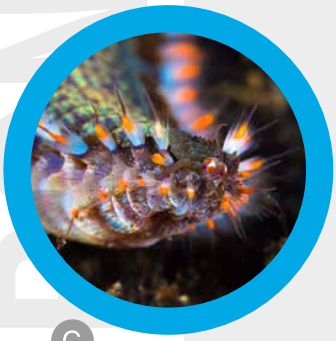
**A team of geotechnical specialists, RGS is constantly digging deep to help our clients understand the ground conditions before proceeding with a build. Now and again, a dig unveils a fabulous find that, to a geologist, is akin to striking gold!.**

A

Recently we were asked to investigate a site in the Lower Greensand, Southern England - an unconsolidated sandstone area deposited several million years ago and highly susceptible to landslides. On taking the ground samples back to HQ, our Fieldworks team experienced a rather surprising find upon opening one of the cores...

One of our engineers, **Charlotte Mason**, spotted our 'find' within the windowless core at around the 2.4metre mark. Clearly, our drillers are so good that they managed to preserve it when coring and avoided destroying it during the **Standard Penetration Test**. **Phew!** Not to mention the engineer's temptation to open and sieve it!

Could it be 'drill art' - **an artefact resulting from the coring process**? On discussion, our team took a punt at it being an extremely fragile fossil. But we were so keen to know for sure; we sent a photograph to **The Natural History Museum** for their expert opinion!



C

THE OPINION

**Expert 1**

A looks more trace fossil than a fossil to me. There are lots in the sands of the mid-Cretaceous, so maybe a weird cut-through **Diplocraterion** B or similar.

B

**Expert 2 (concurring)**

it looks like a section through a vertical **U-shaped burrow** B either **Diplocraterion**, **Arenicolites** or the proximal part of a **Rhizocorallium**.

The 'weird cut' is likely due to the core and burrow not being perfectly parallel, either due to the core not being perfectly aligned perpendicular to the bedding or the burrow itself being at a high angle, but not perpendicular, to the bedding. The latter is common in **Rhizocorallium**.

So, there we have it. A fabulous fossil-find courtesy of team RGS, now on its way to the Natural History Museum for its ongoing preservation and thousands of visitors to enjoy!

N.B. The U-shaped burrow may well have been made by an ancestor of the modern day '**bristle worm**' (polychaete) C whilst scouring a sea bed for food.

**ARE YOU LOOKING FOR SUPPORT WITH ANY PHASE OF THE GROUND INVESTIGATION PROCESS? CALL OUR HELPFUL TEAM ON 01484 604354**



RGS INSITE ISSUE 74

H&S MATTERS

# Risk **Asessment**

**This month's H&S Matters covers a business-critical process fundamental in any sector: Risk Assessment.**

Risk crops up every day in all shapes and forms, no matter what industry. For example, electrical items pose a risk simply because they draw power, yet that risk remains low for many everyday items such as computers. When the task at hand increases the risk, other safety processes become paramount - and that means conducting a Risk Assessment.

## Risk Assessment: what is it?

A Risk Assessment is a formal process used by businesses to help teams recognise, review and reduce risk to keep workers and visitors safe from accidents and injury.

Wherever you find a workplace hazard, you'll find risk. But what is deemed a hazard? It could be environmental - the place of work, ground or surroundings - or the type of equipment you're using seen as hazardous. Working at height, operating heavy machinery, electrical equipment, chemicals and other dangerous substances - even noise - are all hazards and require extra care.

## Why use a Risk Assessment process?

**First and foremost, keeping staff and visitors safe is critical to any work environment**. By CONDUCTING RISK ASSESSMENTS, you can be sure of doing everything possible to prevent an accident or injury from happening - giving peace of mind to you and your people.

It's also worth remembering even a minor incident can cause unnecessary downtime, which comes at a cost to your business. So, being proactive about safety also makes good business sense.


Above all else, protecting your people is a legal requirement for businesses under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. At a minimum, employers are expected to assess workplace risks and consider if any will cause a significant impact on people's health and safety, taking steps to eliminate those risks.

Of course, some businesses will find more potential hazards in their workplace than others. The law goes above this minimum requirement when it comes to people working at height, manual handling, or working with plant and machinery, chemicals and noise.

## UNDERSTANDING THE RULES

**WORKING AT HEIGHT REGULATIONS** 2005

**MANUAL HANDLING OPERATIONS REGULATIONS** 1992

**CONTROL OF NOISE AT WORK REGULATIONS** 2005

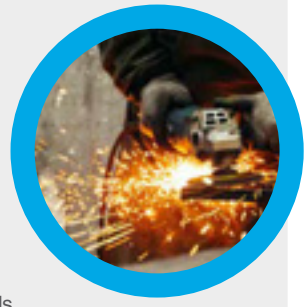
**CONTROL OF SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO WORK REGULATIONS** 2002

**CONTROL OF ASBESTOS REGULATIONS** 2012

**HEALTH AND SAFETY (DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT) REGULATIONS** 1992

HSE
Health & Safety Executive

## The Health and Safety Executive recommends businesses take a 5-step approach to assess risks formally, as follows:



### 1. Identifying hazards

The process begins with a detailed look across your workspace and procedures to identify hazards.

- → WALK around the workplace, look at the conditions and review the activities.
- → CHECK any instructions provided by equipment or chemical manufacturers and consider their suggested hazards and control measures.
- → THINK about long-term risks such as noise and more obvious ones - slips/ trips or work at height hazards.

## 2. Identifying who might be harmed and how

Next, ESTABLISH which people are at risk, how, and to what degree. Start by differentiating the people in your business, staff or visitors, to help you.

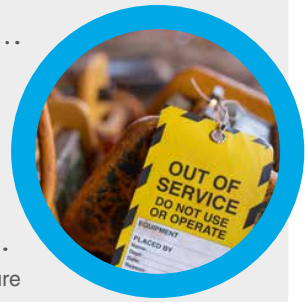
Think about:

- Workers who perform a specific task that comes with risk - such as those operating plant machinery.
- Shift workers, cleaning staff or visitors who might not be familiar with the everyday risks on site.
- New or young inexperienced workers unfamiliar with the day to day site hazards.
- Workers with low English or literacy skills and unable to read safety signs in full.
- New and expectant mothers at risk from chemicals.
- People with a physical or mental disability.
- Members of the public or other organisations that may share the workspace.
- Homeworkers (entitled to the same H&S protection as people working onsite).

## 3. Considering the risk and any necessary controls or precautions

Next comes DECIDING what to do about the risks you have uncovered.

It is worth seeing what other businesses with a similar risk do to help mitigate it - HSE guides can help you here, offering ideas on best practise and potential solutions, including:




- → SWITCHING A HAZARD for a non-hazard - for example, changing the chemical used in a work process.
- → USING PREVENTION METHODS around hazards, such as safety guards on equipment.
- → ROTATING STAFF to minimise individual exposure to a hazard.
- → PROVIDING ADEQUATE PPE, including clothing, footwear and goggles.
- → ENSURING STAFF are kept informed about hazards.

If you uncover multiple risks, prioritise each one according to the severity and deal with the most critical ones first. Ensure all checks are thorough, detailed, considerate to all staff and that your controls are effective.

## 4. Recording the findings - and implementing precautionary steps

There is no legal requirement to record your findings unless your staff number **exceeds five people**.

That said, even with less than five staff working, you may want to note down information about risks anyway to start building a history. Not only a good habit but something you will appreciate as your business grows and you revise your processes as more staff come on board.

Remember - significant risks matter! Any key findings, including the workgroups impacted, will help you with workplace health and safety today and ongoing.

## 5. Reviewing and updating the assessment

Finally, make sure you review risk regularly.

Because, just as your business and staff expand, so too do your work methods and equipment, not to mention the safety procedures that support them.

Equally, regular reviews help you spot old processes where risk assessments are no longer needed.



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## RGS is serious about safety

Over twenty years in business and still going strong - this has only happened thanks to applying robust systems and processes, with risk assessments one of many RGS applies each day to get the job done safely.

Here are our top three tips for managing risk:

01:

### DON'T THINK YOU'RE ALONE!

**The ability to self-manage risk depends on** the business size, sector and complexity of the working environment. Based on the nature of our work, RGS takes a two-pronged approach.

We use our internal team for less complex day-to-day risk assessment and external help from the expert team at WGS Consultants and Citation for other risks such as fire, auditing, toolbox talks, training and face fit testing.

02:

### KEEP AN ACCIDENT LOG

**This is imperative to helping us see patterns**, act on them and minimise risk ongoing; as such, we record the following data:

- → Where an accident took place - office, laboratory, workshop or onsite.
- → The body part injured - head, eye, hand/arm, neck, back, legs/feet.
- → The month and year an accident occurred.

03:

### TRAIN YOUR STAFF

**No business should assume** their staff are aware of the workplace hazards posing a risk. As well as providing regular safety training, we use onsite posters to remind our team about our RGS' Head to toe' safety policy, which we expect them to follow every day.

**We hope today's feature about risk assessment is helpful. Click here to visit the HSE website for more detailed information on this topic.**

Our teams are trained in workplace H&S to preserve the safety of themselves and others whatever the project.

**WHATEVER YOUR GEOTECHNICAL NEEDS, FOR GUIDANCE AND A COMPETITIVE QUOTE CALL OUR HELPFUL TEAM ON**
**01484 604354**

INDUSTRY STANDARDS

# Flying the flag for **Social Value**

**At RGS, we are very much about completing each job to the highest quality, using safe systems and processes. All of this happens through a wider commitment to our people - the team, our local community and clients - and the environment.**

Social Value matters a great deal to us. Recently, we undertook a certification to demonstrate how much we support it through our work, wellbeing mechanisms and extreme care for the world around us.

The **UK Green Building Council** champions social value in construction through three themes: jobs and economic growth; health, wellbeing and the environment; and strength of community. Social value in practice changes from one project to the next and could involve better training opportunities, green initiatives and employment diversity.

Assessed by **Constructionline**, RGS showed how it meets the requirements of their social value question set, proudly passing through demonstrating a commitment to:

- ↗ **Supporting** wellbeing
- ↗ **Engaging** with our local community
- ↗ **Providing** good work conditions
- ↗ **Providing** equal opportunities
- ↗ **Adopting** equality, diversity and inclusion

Well done to everyone at RGS for always going above and beyond to help create a better world for ourselves and others!

**To read more about Constructionline and our certification requirements click here!**

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

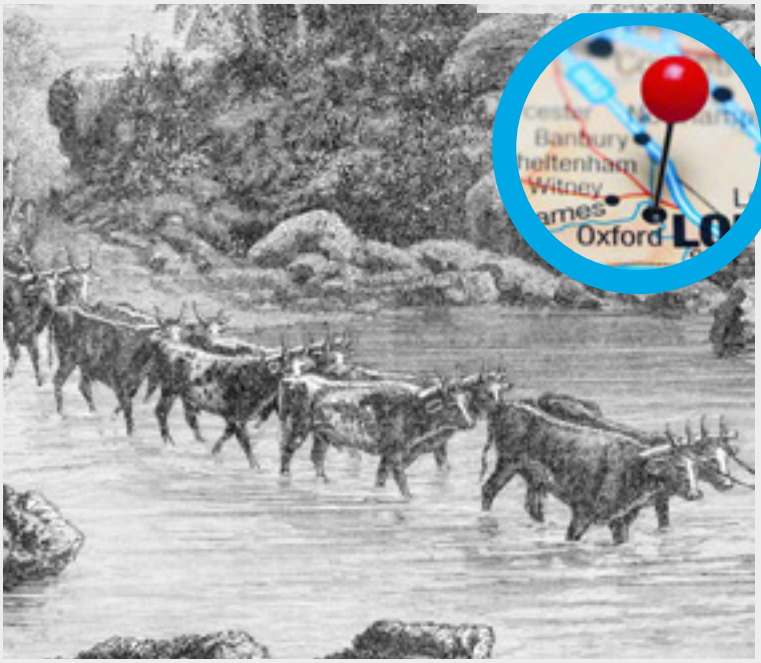
# Ask **Granny**!

**Talking about fossil finds… Here's a question put to the team recently on the back of our latest discovery from deep beneath our feet:**

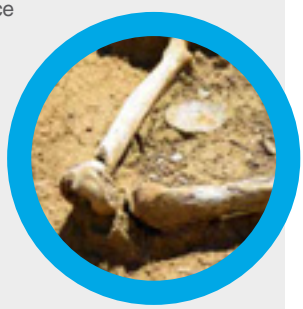
## What is the **strangest thing** your team has dug up from the earth?

To be fair, it's one of the perks of our job: uncovering a fabulous find amid the mud! Unfortunately, though, uncovering something as special as a fossil doesn't happen all too often with many items nowhere near as fascinating!

Aside from the treasures we hope to find, our team takes care to avoid items we don't want to see - like utility pipes! We review service records and use scanning devices before we break ground; if we can't be sure something potentially dangerous is lurking beneath us, a hand dig ensures we're good to go ahead and drill.




Of course, working in proximity to archaeological digs does put our team closer to a possible rarity than many a day job might do. At one job in Oxford, **Charlotte M** was digging an infilled moat. Here, she found multiple bones, suspected by the archaeologist as cow bones because of the location - with the old term '**Oxanforda**' meaning ford or shallow crossing, a place where the cattle (Oxen) could cross safely.



While working on another archaeological site close to a Roman road, **Charlotte C** found a suspected **human femur** below a boulder. The bone's age and degradation made it difficult to say for sure, but given the context and likelihood the boulder was a cist stone above a grave, the archaeologist was confident the bone came from a human.

Closer to home, Rob found himself a rather lovely **1950s beer bottle** when digging a trial pit in a field on a redundant farm. The ground appeared natural, but then the bottle appeared out of nowhere - broken and drained of beer. It would have made for an interesting taste several decades later!

Then there was the **potential Roman coin** that one team member found and immediately had visions about retiring on - until experts confirmed it as none other than a coat button!

So, as you can see, even in our job, it's always a good idea to continue playing the weekly lottery!

We love digging deep for information about what lies underground!

**LET US KNOW HOW WE CAN SUPPORT YOUR NEXT SITE INVESTIGATION - CALL OUR HELPFUL TEAM ON 01484 604354**

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

# Did you **know?**


**Plants and crops have the potential to grow on the moon!**

In a recent study, scientists used dust samples taken from the Apollo missions (1969-1972) in an attempt to grow cress. Much to their delight, their study was successful, with shoots emerging in just two days!

Of course, scientists are over the moon about their latest discovery, which gives good reason to think we might one day find longer lunar stays possible.

It also might lead to crop solutions for food-scarce areas back on earth!

Who knows, maybe a twist on 'A Place in the Sun' could be on our TV screens sooner than we think?!

**Read the full BBC news story here!**

INSITE MEETS

## Alan Gilleard OPERATIONS MANAGER

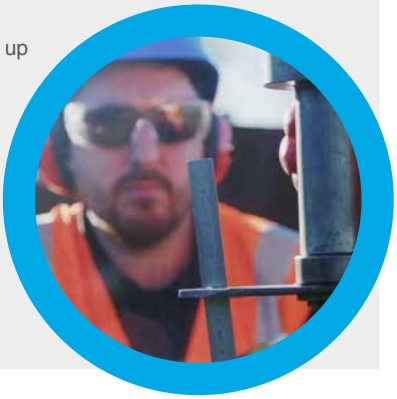
# GETTING YOUR JOB DONE.


What does your role involve? Describe a **typical day**.

As you might guess, it's up to me to ensure everything operates smoothly - which is a mammoth task and changes every day!

Ultimately, I'm responsible for our Fieldworks unit day-to-day running, which primarily involves booking work in the diary, collaborating with the quoting team on job specifics and costs, and with our engineers on start-ups and the equipment they need for each job. I also arrange sub-contractors and plant and equipment hires where necessary.

We can't function without our tools, so it's up to me to make sure our rigs and vehicles are running correctly. Checking work instructions, passing them out and reviewing them on their return is also a big part of my job.



Then there's training the team on any new kit and the operating techniques. I told you it was mammoth.

## How does **your role** help our RGS clients?

The work we do is critical to construction - without us, the ground conditions on sites remain completely unknown and can pose a risk to building work. Yet we cannot complete any work ourselves without fully operational and safe equipment and a knowledgeable team who understands how to perform their job safely, efficiently and to a high standard.

We also need to balance new technology against our existing fleet of rigs to stay cost-efficient (one rig is 15 years old and still running strong!). Making sure each rig is running to its full potential without any faults - and dealing with issues quickly - keeps the job running smoothly for our clients, saving them time and cost. And delivering everything we do with quality means we have a happy client not just with us for one job but many.


## What do you **enjoy most** about what you do?

It's tricky to pick one thing, but I certainly enjoy how we continuously learn, grow, and achieve more each day. We all work well together as a team, not just in Fieldworks but across the business, and I believe it shows in our completed projects. We have a shared pride in all we do, and that's why clients keep coming back to us - and why our staff stay with us until they retire!

## If money was **no object**...

I would love to see **bigger premises** at work to contain an even vaster range of **rigs, vehicles & equipment to cover all eventualities**. Outside of RGS - well, that's easy: I'd have a huge garage filled with motorbikes (**one for every occasion**) and would pump plenty of cash into the mighty Huddersfield Town!

# The **Health and Safety** Poem

**Our H&S expert, Nick Wilding, sent us this poem recently. Written by Don Merell, we think it is a powerful piece and serves as a reminder to all of us about the importance of safety at work.**

I could have saved a life that day,
**But I chose to look the other way**.
It wasn't that I didn't care,
I had the time, and I was there.

**But I didn't want to seem a fool**,
Or argue over a safety rule.
I knew he'd done the job before,
If I spoke up, he might get sore.

The chances didn't seem that bad,
I'd done the same, He knew I had.
**So I shook my head and walked on by**,
He knew the risks as well as I.

He took the chance, I closed an eye,
And with that act, I let him die.
I could have saved a life that day,
**But I chose to look the other way**.

Now every time I see his wife,
I'll know, I should have saved his life.
**That guilt is something I must bear**,
But it isn't something you need share.

If you see a risk that others take,
That puts their health or life at stake.
**The question asked**, **or thing you say**,
Could help them live another day.

If you see a risk and walk away,
Then hope you never have to say,
**I could have saved a life that day**,
But I chose, to look the other way.

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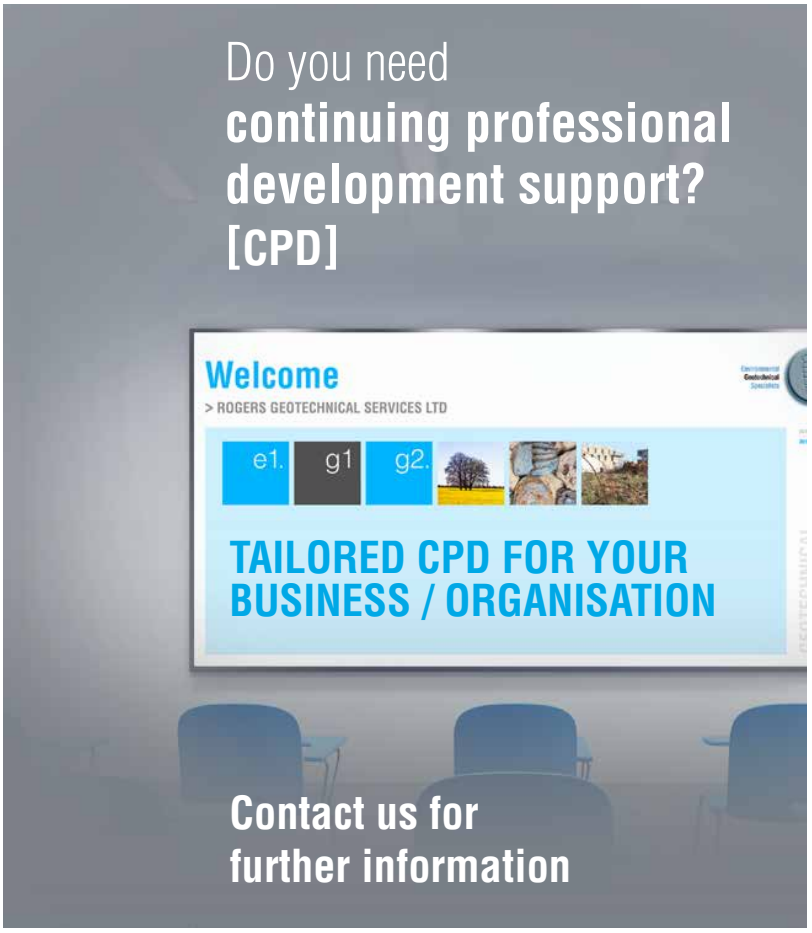


For more information about your investigation requirements please don't hesitate to contact us.

Telephone on 01484 604 354

**Click here to email us**

CLIENT FEEDBACK

## Talk to us

> The RGS team has been brilliant: their service is seamless and efficient. We'll definitely use them again!

We're always keen to hear what clients think of our service and welcome your feedback.

Click here to email us your comments.

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